2022 Masters in Agricultural Innovation Support

Project Summary

1. Project Title and Associated Programme	
KT Programme	Forestry Development Department (FDD)
Project title	**Knowledge sharing of Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF) management systems through eLearning, interactive in-forest KT formats and new digital tools**

2. Project background

This project will build on the progress of existing innovative KT initiatives within the FDD. It will aim to consolidate achievements and further expand resource capacity and know-how with regard to virtual and interactive learning and the use of smart-digital technology for data capture and communication. Recent relevant projects are:

- Smart-Forest. Strategic Communication funded project (2020) which lead to the adoption of a new interactive and digital KT tool: a new tablet based app for use in special forest plots called "marteloscopes". In partnership with Coillte, a number of marteloscope plots have been installed including in Oak Park, Carlow. New training programmes for forest owners and other user groups have been tested in 2020 and further developed in 2021.
- In 2022 the FDD will roll out new virtual and interactive training workshops on CCF systems linked to the marteloscope initiative for forest owners, students, and foresters.
- RESONATE Horizon 2020: This EU project will run from 2021-2025 and it will give an overview of the impact of the main resilience challenges to forest outputs leading to innovative KT initiatives for a range of stakeholders. It will also involve surveying a number of case study forest using innovative design, and methodologies.
- ContinuFor (DAFM-funded project 2022-2025); TranSSFor – GIA funded 2017– 2022; Both projects built upon the DAFM-funded (2010 – 2014) LISS project. TranSSFor included research on tree-marker training and provided dissemination of CCF knowledge.

3. Project aims and objectives

The project aims to develop specific expertise in :

- New effective virtual and interactive KT format using virtual classroom best practice and effective digital tools and platforms as part of the roll out of the marteloscope training plots network and stakeholder upskilling in Silviculture systems.
- To assist the FDD in the further developing and delivering those pilot programmes as part of the advisory service through a placement programme.

- To assist the development of innovative design, and methodologies for effective survey and data capture of private forests and relevant data communication to forest owners and stakeholders as part of the FDD advisory service.
- To assess the impact to a range of stakeholders of different training methodologies with a view to further develop KT programmes.

4. Suggestions for methodology

The candidate will be in placement for 15 month and will:

- Help prepare and deliver eLearning blended programmes for forest owners and other stakeholders in conjunction with the marteloscope network and other KT programmes.
- Carry out a detailed evaluation of impact on participants' of the Silviculture training and produce feedback report. This could form part of a specific assignment.
- Assist in the testing and roll out of innovative forest survey methodologies as part of advisory service digital upskilling with links to the RESONATE project.

5. Expected Impact of the Project

The Teagasc Forestry Development Department is an integrated department providing advisory, training and research support to forest owners and forestry practitioners. EU and Government policy is increasingly focussing on enhancing the multi-functionality of our forests and the capacity of forest owners and managers. This also includes the adoption of a wider range of management practices than heretofore, including Continuous Cover Forestry (CCF). This MAIS project will enhance the capacity of advisers to support forest managers and owners in achieving their objectives including financial management, timber production, ecosystem services and increased forest resilience.